

AMERICAN JOURNAL OF NUMISMATICS,

AND

Bulletin of American Numismatic and Archæological Societies.

VOL. VIII.

BOSTON, APRIL, 1874.

No. 4.

THE COPPER COINAGE OF THE EARL OF STIRLING.

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THE coining of copper in England, at a very early period, was farmed out to private persons under a royal grant or charter. If we are rightly informed, this coinage is still conducted in that country in a somewhat similar manner. The coining of small pieces by the Earl of Stirling was in some sense, as will appear in the sequel, a private enterprise, authorized nevertheless by royal mandate and limited by the usual restrictions.

But before entering upon the historical account of that coinage, as proposed in this paper, it will be necessary for the better understanding of the subject to pause in the outset, and answer the inquiry, which the numismatic student has a right to make, for some general outline of the life and character of the Earl of Stirling. Our statement shall be as brief and compact as possible.

The Earl of Stirling was a Scotch nobleman, born in 1580, at Menstrie, an unimportant hamlet a few miles east of Stirling, of which his father was the fifth laird or baron. The family name was Alexander, and, as the earl came to the peerage late in life, he is more familiarly known in history as Sir William Alexander.

He early developed scholarly tastes, and to a wide familiarity with the Greek and Latin languages, he added a knowledge of the more important European tongues, as the French, Italian, and Spanish. After spending some time in foreign travel, at the age of twenty-three he attracted the attention of the literary world by the publication of a small volume of poetry, and volumes continued to appear from his pen almost yearly for more than a decade. He was the most voluminous Scotch poet of his period, and one of the first who discarded the rough dialect of Scotland for the more highly cultivated and refined English.

His tastes and learning and other attractive qualities made him a great favorite of James I., as likewise of his successor, the unfortunate Charles.

By the royal favor he was advanced to many important official stations, and among others was appointed Master of Requests for Scotland, in which

office it became his duty to see that all Scottish petitions were suitable in matter and couched in proper language, before they were brought to the ear of the sovereign. He was likewise for many years Secretary of State for Scotland; in this office he was responsible for the legality of all documents relating to Scotland, which were to pass under either the privy or the great seal.

It will be seen that in the former office he was the adviser of the people, and in the latter the counsellor of the king.

As early as 1620 he became actively interested in American colonization. His influence at court rendered it not difficult for him to obtain all the privileges, in any enterprise of this sort, which the royal bounty could bestow. He accordingly obtained a charter, under the great seal, of what he called New Scotland, a vast domain embracing the present Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, and the territory lying immediately north of the last named province, and south of the river St. Lawrence. At a later period, when the French were expelled, in 1628, for a short time from Canada, then known as New France, he obtained another charter, covering a belt of land three hundred miles wide, lying on both sides of the St. Lawrence, and extending from its mouth to the Pacific Ocean. And lastly, he received a grant from the Council for New England, of which he was a member, of Long Island, and a part of the present State of Maine.

He made several attempts to plant colonies in his New Scotland. In 1628 he established a Scotch settlement at Annapolis, in Nova Scotia, but after three or four years this colony, greatly to his disappointment, was removed, agreeably to the terms of a treaty entered into by Charles I. with the King of France. In 1639 he sent an agent to Boston, to encourage settlements on Long Island, and many of the early planters on the eastern part of the island obtained the title to their lands from the Earl of Stirling.

He was elevated to the Scottish peerage in 1630, as Viscount of Stirling, and in 1633 was advanced to the Earldom of Stirling. He died in London in February, 1641.

While there is much in the history and character of this nobleman attractive to the general reader, that part of his career connected with American colonization will always be studied with a special interest on this side of the Atlantic.

From this brief outline we shall not fail to see that he was a man of extraordinary energy and enterprise, and that he possessed a great personal influence, certainly in regard to Scottish affairs, at the court of Charles I.

Near the beginning of the year 1631, a proposition was made from Scotland, favored by the Earl of Stirling if not originating with him, that small copper coins should be struck for circulation in that kingdom; and it was especially urged on account of the scarcity of money at that time, and the great convenience of small coin for the poor, and for the payment of small sums.

The petition of the Scots was favorably entertained by the King and the Privy Council, and the requisite order having been issued, Charles addressed a note, on the 30th of June, 1631, to Nicholas Briot, directing him to prepare the dies and other instruments necessary for coining copper farthings, and to send them, under the direction of the Earl of Stirling, to the royal Mint at Edinburgh, and to repair thither himself to establish and superintend the works.

Nicholas Briot, to whom this order was given, was at that time the chief graver of coins and medals in England, having held the same office in France. He was esteemed the most distinguished artist of his time in this department. He left France in 1628 in disgust, and repaired to England, where he was cordially received, and where his skill was duly appreciated. He was thereupon immediately advanced to the high position to which we have referred. We are informed by Martin Folkes that he was the first who exhibited in Britain the *specimen* of a piece with letters upon the edge. This was a medal in gold, struck on the occasion of the King's coronation at Edinburgh, on the 18th June, 1633.

On the edge of the medal the following inscription was "most elegantly impressed":—

EX. AVRO. VT. IN. SCOTIA. REPERITVR. BRIOT. FECIT. EDINBVRGI. 1633.

On the 10th of July, 1631, the King directed the Treasurer of Scotland to pay over to the Earl of Stirling, in acknowledgment of the good and faithful service rendered by him, the royalty, or what properly belonged to the king, in the coinage of the copper coins.

On the 13th of December following, the King, in a note to the Privy Council of Scotland, gave directions that the coins to be issued should be in three different pieces, specifying the weight and title of each; and he also laid down the mottoes and devices which they were to bear. The original project of coining farthings was abandoned, on the ground that coins of the same denomination, but varying in weight and value, would be more "convenient for exchange and reckoning," in which we seem to see the germ of the decimal system, but which has remained latent in Great Britain even down to the present day. The Council were directed to take such order in regard to the change of the weight of the pieces, as they might think fit, or as the necessities of the country should require.

The royalty on these coins was granted by the King to the Earl of Stirling, for the space of nine years, and longer if necessary, in payment of a precept for 6,000 pounds sterling granted to him by James I., and another of 10,000 pounds by Charles I., upon very good considerations.

The precept for 10,000 pounds sterling granted by Charles, was in remuneration for losses sustained in the removal of the Scotch colony, already referred to, planted by the Earl in 1628, on the present site of Annapolis in Nova Scotia. It is interesting to the student of American history to observe, that this coinage is thus intimately connected with the public recognition of the great indebtedness of the Scots to the enterprise of Stirling in attempting an American colony, two years before Winthrop founded the town of Boston, the present metropolis of New England, and when the Episcopal clergyman, the Rev. William Blaxton, was the sole proprietor as well as the sole inhabitant of the peninsula of Shawmut.

Authority was at first given for the coining of 1,500 stone-weight. After the work had been in progress two years, this amount having been apparently nearly exhausted, authority was given for 6,000 stone-weight in addition, and as much more as should be needed to discharge the royal indebtedness, issuing from year to year about the same quantity as during the first two, until the expiration of his patent at the end of nine years.

Whether all or the bulk of the 16,000 pounds sterling due to the Earl was finally discharged by this enterprise, history is silent.

The work was commenced in 1632, but we have no complete evidence as to when it terminated, or the exact quantity of coin struck. We shall refer to these two points, however, in the sequel.

No treatise upon numismatics, either Scotch or English, with which we are acquainted, has given any account of the Earl of Stirling's connection with this coinage. It is, however, proper to add that this omission is not remarkable, since the contractors for the coining of copper are not usually mentioned by writers on this subject, except in an incidental way. We have seen several engraved representations of these coins in illustrated works, but in no case identified as of the Stirling coinage.

Mr. Henry F. Brown of the Numismatic Society of Liverpool, England, very kindly forwarded to the writer, by mail, in 1872, through the Secretary of that Society, Mr. Heywood Chapman, several of the small copper coins of Scotland, of the period of Charles I., belonging to his private collection. Two of them we were able to identify as of the Stirling coinage.



For the accurate engravings of them, which we here present, we are indebted to the courtesy of the Prince Society, at whose expense they were made to illustrate a brief notice of this coinage in a memoir of the Earl, prepared by the present writer, and recently published by that Society, under the title "Sir William Alexander and American Colonization." The original drawings are from the delicate and skilful pencil of Miss Louise M. Hill, of Boston.



The devices and mottoes ordered by the King in a communication to the Privy Council of Scotland, December 13, 1631, were as follows:—

On one side a figure to indicate the value, under an imperial crown, with the royal inscription.

On the other the thistle with the motto,—

NEMO ME IMPUNE LACESSET.

The coins were to be of three denominations. One weighing thirty-two grains, another weighing sixteen grains, and a third weighing eight grains; the latter, the King adds, "being the weight formerlie allowed by yow to the farthings."

The smaller of Mr. Brown's coins, above represented, weighs exactly eight grains, and the II under the imperial crown indicates its value to be two farthings. The larger weighs precisely thirty-two grains, and the value is indicated to be two pennies, or four times that of the smallest coin.

The reader will observe that they conform in type and weight strictly to the King's direction, and their identity, as of the Stirling coinage, could hardly be more completely established, although the value enstamped upon them appears to be but half that originally intended.

It will here be proper to remark that when the investigation for the purpose of identifying the Stirling coinage was in progress in 1872, and a correspondence with the officers of the Liverpool Numismatic Society was

solicited and cordially granted, Mr. William S. Appleton, the Secretary of the Boston Numismatic Society, was absent in Europe, and his rich collection was not accessible at that time, as it usually is for all historical purposes. On Mr. Appleton's return, he at once placed in the hands of the writer two specimens of the Stirling coins of exactly the same type as those belonging to Mr. Brown's private collection, already described. Both of them were found to be somewhat heavier than the royal license required, the larger weighing thirty-seven grains instead of thirty-two, and the smaller weighing nine grains instead of eight. At that early period little care was taken to secure exactness, the chief concern being that they should not fall below the required weight, and the excess in this case was, undoubtedly, accidental. The smaller one is in fine preservation, scarcely less perfect than when it came from the mint, abbreviated by the occasional suppression of a letter, or by causing two to occupy the same space, one being struck over another in several instances.

Of the intermediate coin, weighing sixteen grains, ordered to be struck, we have seen no specimen, nor any engraved illustration of it, in any work which we have examined relating to the coinage of Scotland.

The Stirling coins were undoubtedly struck at the old Scotch mint, or *Cunyie House*, still standing in the little court at the foot of Gray's Close, in Edinburgh, where are also the more spacious buildings in which were the offices of the Scottish mint before the Union; but now for a long time appropriated to other uses.

In the common parlance of the people they were called Turners, from Tournois, a term originally applied by the French to coins struck at *Tours*.

For several years the Earl of Stirling's coins appear to have been acceptable to the people of Scotland, and were circulated throughout the kingdom, nearly to the exclusion of other small coins. But at length circumstances arose which developed serious objections to them, the popular indignation was aroused, and they were denounced with acrimony and bitterness.

While the weight was apparently precisely that established by the government, and in this respect there was no violation of law, a change had nevertheless been introduced, which could not be easily reconciled with the habits, customs, and associations of the people.

The farthing no longer found its place in the coinage, and a piece of the same weight as the farthing was legalized to pass as two farthings, and the change extended, in the same ratio, to all the pieces issued. Whether the commercial value of the material had increased in the same proportion, so as to render the change necessary, it is not easy, at this distance of time, to determine; perhaps it had, and perhaps it had not. But however this may have been, the change was inconvenient and disagreeable; it interfered with old associations, and caused a visible ripple in the small currents of trade. Even under the most popular government and in the most peaceful times, a change in the nomenclature of the coinage, or moneys of account, especially if it break in upon associated values, inevitably meets with resistance, and is submitted to only with hesitation and reluctance. Whatever gets out of the grooves of cherished habit and established custom among men, must wait long and patiently, and be subjected to many a strain, before it can move on smoothly and without friction. For more than forty years after the United States adopted the decimal system in our coinage and moneys of account,

shillings and *pence*, with all their inconveniences, could not be forced out of use, and even now are terms sometimes heard among the small traders and shopkeepers.

The Earl of Stirling's coinage had at least the infelicity of employing old terms with a new meaning; the change was irritating and vexatious, far more so than would be possible at the present time, reaching as it did, every person in the kingdom, who had the means of buying a loaf of bread or a horn of beer. This alone could not fail to render these coins distasteful and obnoxious to the whole population.

But the more active cause of their unpopularity may be found in the hostility of the Scotch people generally to the arbitrary and despotic government of Charles I., under whose authority they were emitted.

The year 1637 was the crisis in Scotland of this monarch's fate. He had attempted, under the inspiring influence of the narrow and bigoted Laud, to impose upon the Scotch, without their consent, a mode of worship, that should be uniform, or nearly so, with that of England. A book of common prayer for Scotland was accordingly prepared, attached to which was a version of the Psalms into metre, which had been partly executed by King James, but revised and completed by the Earl of Stirling, and as a remuneration of his services, as editor and author, a copyright was granted to him for twenty-one years. His pecuniary interests and his ambition as a poet, were accordingly both involved in the successful introduction of this Service-book. And when the King sent out a proclamation resting solely on the authority of his royal prerogative, requiring the use of the book in all the churches of Scotland, if by the magic of his kingly power he had kindled volcanic fires beneath the surface of that entire kingdom, he could hardly have thrown the whole population into a more violent state of excitement. The public worship was interrupted, the clergy were assaulted, even missiles were hurled at them when performing their most sacred offices, and nowhere was the new service permitted to be used. From this time onward, the King and all associated with him, were hated and mistrusted by the bulk of the Scottish people. It was not possible for anything that fell within the domain of the royal prerogative, to be regarded with friendliness or indulgence. The Earl of Stirling's connection with the Service-book and the coinage, was of this character, and he shared the popular distrust and disapprobation. The wits of the day were ready with their keenest weapons; and burlesques and satires and lampoons were employed to exhilarate the hearts of the people, and mould them at the same time into a permanent hatred of the royal cause. The Earl of Stirling had placed upon his palatial house, erected in 1632, at Stirling, and still standing, a monument both of his ambition and of his taste, his family arms, with the motto, *Per mare per terras*. This was travestied into *Per metres per turners*, with the implication, that the house had been erected from the anticipated proceeds of the coinage and the metrical version of the Psalms; both of which, as we have seen, were, directly or indirectly, subjects of popular complaint.

An old chronicler of the times records that, in November, 1639, two years after the imposed Service-book had been successfully resisted, King Charles's turners, struck by the Earl of Stirling, were, by proclamation at the Cross of Edinburgh, cried down from "two pennies to a penny." The

effect of this was to withdraw the obnoxious coins from circulation, indicating very clearly that prices had already, in the seven years that had elapsed since their introduction, adapted themselves, in some degree at least, to the new coinage. This proclamation was shortly recalled, "because," says the same authority, "there was no other money passing to make change."

But the irritation of the people had not yet reached its height, but was destined to go on, gathering new impulses and additional strength, until it came to its ultimate intensity in the King's tragical death.

In a few weeks after the recall of the proclamation "crying" down its value, the indignation of the people became so intense that they determined utterly to abandon the new coinage, and to have nothing to do with it whatever. "Now," says the annalist, "they would give nothing, penny nor half-penny for King Charles's turners; but King James's turners only should pass. Whereby all change and trade was taken away through want of current money, because their slight turners was the only money almost passing through all Scotland." This absolute and total rejection of the legal coinage of the country at any value whatever, renders it obvious, that the naturally warm blood of the Scots was now at a boiling heat, that reason was no longer on the throne, that passion had seized the sceptre, and was in triumphant and despotic command.

How long this restraint continued, we have not been able to determine; perhaps no record exists which can throw any light upon this point. Doubtless this coinage was not looked upon with favor for the next twenty years, or until the restoration of Charles II.

The issue of the Earl of Stirling's coins from the mint must have ceased in 1637, when the hostility of the Scots was aroused against the King by the imposition of the Service-book, which was about five years from the beginning of the issue in 1632. In 1634 an order was granted by the King for the coinage of 6,000 stone-weight of copper, as we have already stated, from which it may be inferred that the 1,500 stone-weight previously ordered, had been nearly exhausted in the two years which had then elapsed, and it was proposed to continue the coinage at about the same rate annually. If then not far from 700 stone-weight was coined annually for five years, it would amount to about 49,000 pounds of copper. If this estimate approximates the truth, it will be easy to imagine the vast number of these coins that were thus thrown into circulation.

Specimens of the Stirling coinage are not at the present day common, nor indeed are they on the other hand of the greatest rarity. By the original order it was provided that only one fifteenth part of the copper should be made into the smallest pieces, and consequently, if this order was carried out, a much smaller number of the piece of eight grains was struck than of the others, but this would not probably, at this distance of time, affect their rarity to any perceptible degree. That the largest coin or the two penny piece was struck in the greatest number, may also be inferred from the proclamation at the Cross of Edinburgh, which cried down the "twa pennies to ane penny," while the smaller coins were not mentioned at all. Those that have come down to us are probably of the number that were laid aside, near the time of their issue, by antiquaries, and more especially by the loyalists, who preserved and cherished these coins as mementoes of Charles I. The royal inscription

and the imperial crown reminded the cavalier of the King whom he venerated and loved as his sovereign by a divine right, whose memory was more dear to him and more tenderly cherished because he had been snatched from the throne by a violent and tragical death.

GOLD PENNY OF HENRY III.

"UNTIL the commencement of the last century, it was the generally received opinion that Edward III. was the first English monarch who coined gold money in this kingdom. About 1730, however, attention was drawn to a passage in a manuscript chronicle of the city of London, which states that in 1257 this king coined a penny of fine gold, of the weight of two sterlings (silver pennies of the time), and ordered that it should pass for twenty pence.

"These coins, nevertheless, do not seem to have been popular, as Mr. Carte, in his *History of England*, says that the citizens of London made a representation against them on the 24th November, in the same year, and that 'the king was so willing to oblige them, that he published a proclamation, declaring that nobody was obliged to take it (the gold penny), and whoever did, might bring it to his exchange, and receive there the value at which it had been made current, an half-penny only being deducted, probably for the coinage.'

"By a proclamation of his 54th year, quoted by Snelling, the value of this coin was raised from twenty pence to twenty-four pence, or two shillings.

"These gold pennies are extremely rare, two or three specimens only being known. One of the two in the British Museum was purchased for £41 10s. Another sold for £140 at Captain Murchison's sale, in June 1864. They bear, *obv.*, the king crowned, seated on his throne in royal robes, and holding in his right hand a sceptre, and in his left the orb. HENRIC' REX III., *Rev.* a long double cross or cross voided, extending nearly to the edge of the coin; with a rose between three pellets in each angle. WILLEM. ON LVND., LVDNE., or, LVNDEN. The workmanship is much superior to that of the silver coins of the same period.

"*Weight.* — 45 1-5 grains.

"*Fineness.* — Pure or fine gold, without alloy.

"Between the issue of this gold penny in 1257, and the first issue of Edward III. in 1344, an interval of nearly ninety years, no coinage of gold money is known to have taken place." — Henfrey's *English Coins*, London, 1870.

CIVILIZATION OF THE INCAS.

"THE subjects of the Incas . . . with all their patient perseverance, did little more than penetrate below the crust, the outer rind, as it were, formed over those golden caverns which lie hidden in the dark depths of the Andes. Yet what they gleaned from the surface was more than adequate for all their demands, for they were not a commercial people, and had no knowledge of money. In this they differed from the ancient Mexicans, who had an established

currency of a determinate value. In one respect, however, they were superior to their American rivals, since they made use of weights to determine the quantity of their commodities, a thing wholly unknown to the Aztecs. This fact is ascertained by the discovery of silver balances, adjusted with perfect accuracy, in some of the tombs of the Incas." — Prescott's *Conquest of Peru*, Vol. I. pp. 154, 155.

HIGLEY COPPERS.

A COIN made from this ore, called "Higley's Coppers," was at one time in some circulation in the vicinity of the mines. It is said to have passed for two and sixpence (forty-two cents), in paper currency it is presumed, though composed chiefly, if not entirely, of copper.

One of these coins, dated 1737, is in the cabinet of the Connecticut Historical Society. Its inscription on one side is, "I am good copper;" on the other, "Value me as you please." These coppers were much used for melting up with gold in the manufacture of jewelry, and for this purpose were considered vastly preferable to ordinary copper coin. They were not in circulation as a currency after the peace of 1783. The inventor and maker is supposed to have been Doctor Samuel Higley, who a few years before this had attempted to manufacture steel, and was somewhat distinguished for enterprises of this character. — *From the History of Simsbury, Granby, and Canton [Conn.], by Noah A. Phelps. Hartford, 1845.*

AN INDIAN MEDAL.

ONE of these four Mozeemleks had a medal hanging around his neck of a kind of reddish copper, something like the figure which you see on the map. I had it melted by Mr. de Tonti's gunsmith, who had some knowledge of the metals; but it became heavier and more deeply colored than before and withal somewhat tractable. I desired them to give me a circumstantial account of these medals. They told me that the Tahuglauks, who are their artisans, put a great value on them. Besides this, I could learn nothing of the country, commerce, or customs of these distant people. — *From Baron La Hontan's Travels in North America, made in 1689. Hague edition, 1703, chapter 16.*

BOSTON IN YE OLD TIME.

THERE is less paper money in this colony [Massachusetts Bay] than in any other of America; the current coin is chiefly gold and silver; and Boston is the only place, I believe, where there ever was a mint to coin money.

From Burnaby's Travels in North America, in 1759 and 1760.

CHURCH MEDAL.

MR. GEORGE H. LOVETT, die-sinker, of 181 Broadway, N. Y., has recently issued a very neat medal for the "American Church Missionary Society." It is intended for distribution among members of their branch in Mexico.

Obv. Within a circle, and surrounded by rays of light, an open Bible on which lies the Cross. Around this, outside the circle, the legend "American-Church-Missionary-Society.*"

Rev. A dove, with wings spread, holding in its beak a sprig of olive, and sustaining an irregular convoluted scroll covering the field, on which rests an open volume, marked "Biblia Sacrada;" rays of light from the dove's beak cross the scroll and underlie the volume. Legend, "Cree-en-el-Señor-Jesus-y-Seras-Salvo" — "Iglesia-de-Jesus-Mexico."

Size 25. White metal.

W.

GREEK COINS.

THE collection of coins deposited in the Medal Room of the British Museum is the finest, if not the largest, in Europe. Kept there as in the national strong-box, and filtered through the adjacent or so-called Ornament Room by the display of a typical set of electrotypes or the march past of a few trays of real coins at a time, its beauty, size, and importance can scarcely be appreciated by the visitor to its casual ward. The access to the collection, or rather the iron-doored room in which it is preserved, is limited to a few, and to them a portion only is shown at a time under a glass tray; yet this grand collection continues to grow unseen, and the glimpse of a fraction of it through the pages of a catalogue is like the revelation of a mystery to the general public. The grants for its enlargement have been on the most liberal scale, the accessions to its cabinets of the choicest and finest specimens. The strength of the Greek section lies in the autonomous coins struck by the free towns and petty republics of Greece, Asia Minor, the Isles, and the Colonies. The cabinets of the Rue Richelieu had more examples and rarer types of the Kings and Tyrants, yet even in this branch they are now equalled, if not excelled, by the suits in Bloomsbury.

The Lydian or Argive, who first stamped gold or silver, was a genius. Clay and leather and other plastic substances had been stamped before, but it was the hand of a giant mind which first impressed on a lump of metal its weight, its origin, and its responsibility. It converted the uncertain ingot into the decided coin, and the man of the Old World no longer required the scale, like the pedantic Chinese, to measure every ounce he paid. Greece and Asia contended for the honor of the invention. The difference lay in the metal. Asia issued gold, Greece silver. Cræsus, B. C. 560, struck gold, and Pheidon of Argos silver, according to the Parian chronicle, three centuries before. Later, Asia coined silver also; declining Greece gold; and when Philip of Macedon found the gold mines of Mount Pangæum and issued gold staters, their seductive influence corrupted the orators of Athens and the statesmen of Greece.

Once invented, the improvement was rapid. At first, the device of an animal was seen on one side, the other had the irregular indentation, apparently the impress of the projection of the lower die to hold the gland-shaped lump while struck; for the Greeks were aware how the coin slipped under the hammer, although they could not invent either the ring or the collar to clutch the piece. This little trick was one of the last discoveries of the modern mint. By degrees, however, the irregular indentation became the regular square, and a device within it completed the reverse. Nor were the pieces regular in shape or exact in weight; they were sometimes double struck or cracked at the edge. The high relief of their devices, which gave them artistic beauty, impaired their public utility. They could not be piled or stacked, but could only be heaped, while the friction of daily use rapidly deteriorated their value. Hence coins like them are unsuited for modern civilization. They have no more relation to it than the arrangements of Greek temples have to the requirements of churches or other public buildings. They were

the counters of a nation of artists, in whose mind was deeply impressed the love of the beautiful, occasionally to the neglect of the useful. To the modern die engraver they have proved an invaluable aid to his art, and guided his taste as soon as it had emancipated itself from the thralldom of the imitation of Byzantine coinage.

For about eight hundred years, from the first coin of Greece or Asia to the days of the Roman Emperor Gallienus, the states of Greece enjoyed the right of coinage, while free, in all metals; after their subjection to the Imperial eagles of Rome, in brass and copper only. Coinage in the precious metals, an Imperial privilege, was the badge of a centralized sovereignty; the contemptible copper was left to the control of the local municipality. The conquests of Alexander the Great had before this partly suppressed the civic devices, as in the principal towns of Europe and Asia, one type, his own regal one, was adopted, and the place of issue indicated by a device, a letter, or a monogram. His Greek successors continued the system as far as their power extended, and the Romans followed up the plan. The Greek series exhibits during the eight hundred years coins of more than 1,000 towns and republics, and above 300 kings, and of each of those many varieties, supposed to amount to 60,000 pieces.

The monetary system, too, had its difficulties, as each town had its local issue; rarely does a countermark attest the adoption of the coinage of a city by its neighbor or its rival. The ancient traveller must in the course of a short journey have passed a small collection through his hand, and constantly applied to the money changer, unless, as in some states of Europe, the change was given in miscellaneous pieces which were taken at their nominal value. The principal denominations were the drachm, didrachm, and tetradrachm, with a rarer oktodrachm and dekadrachm, and their subdivisions. The drachm of the Ægean standard weighed 96 grains, its didrachm about 192. The Attic drachm was 67.5 grains, its didrachm 135, and tetradrachm 270 grains. The kings of Macedon used a drachm of 58 grains, and a tetradrachm of 232 grains. These are the principal monetary systems.

The coins principally found in cabinets are the didrachms and tetradrachms; the drachms are rarer; the smaller denominations, the obolos and its multiples, are still more so. Some are so small that they have been preserved with difficulty, or have escaped the eye. The devices of the mints were the heads of deities or heroes, sacred animals, arms, and weapons. They often had relation to each other. In the silver coinage the skill of the artist was best shown in the tetradrachm, which is about the size of a florin or half-crown; but it is wonderful what merit the Greek engraver evinced in Asiatic coins of electrum not larger than a sixpence. The name of the town always, of the annual magistrate often, of the artist seldom, appeared on the coins of the free states. When the space became too narrow, monograms were used, and at a later period, and exceptionally, dates. Kings, indeed, allowed the names of magistrates and cities on their coins, but artists were carefully excluded, and few have left their names behind them. Their names can be counted on the fingers, and one only, Theodotos of Clazomenæ, asserts his character. Yet they must have been as well known as the engravers of gems or hard stones, long lists of whom appear in classic authors and on works of ancient art. The Greek, occupied in political struggles and metaphysical discussions, cared little for the history of the processes of the art, and the mint in particular was forgotten; a few scattered notices about coins are to be found in Hellenic literature, but no treatise on the subject.

Artists and their dies have alike passed into oblivion; for, although tens of thousands of these appliances must have been engraved, no certain ancient Greek die is known. Allowing that the same public authority which made them also as certainly cancelled them, and admitting that they were easily broken and constantly renewed, yet the problem of their absence still remains unsolved. Iron, indeed, might perish through the oxidization of time, but bronze survives. Accident, fire, vicissitudes, and public calamities must have often buried the matrix and the mould as well as the coin in the depths of the earth.

Every small republic and principal town had its circulation, and the state of the whole Greek coinage was like that of the copper issue of England in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, when any tradesman might be his own mint master and issue his peculiar token. To this is due the infinite variety of beautiful Hellenic coins, which, regarded as works of art, are metallic camei of a high order of merit; not so indestructible as engraved stones, but public and authentic productions of ancient art produced by rival artists.

The revival of the arts in Europe brought with it the desire of collecting. Petrarch, in the fourteenth century, had collected a few Roman coins, which he presented to the Emperor Charles IV. Later the De Medici collected the museum and cabinets of Florence. The passion extended to kings and princes, and rich persons followed the fashion. In the middle of the sixteenth century there were 1,000 known collections in Europe. The first important cabinet in England was that of Charles I., but the civil war dispersed or melted it. There were several

collections in the seventeenth century, but the eighteenth was the period when the largest were formed.

The principal collectors were physicians. Meade had a celebrated collection, which went to the hammer; Sir Hans Sloane another, which was absorbed by the British Museum; William Hunter a third, now at Glasgow. Besides these the Pembroke and Devonshire collections were of later growth and less importance. In the present century the national collections were enriched by the additions of the coins of Cracherode and Payne Knight, distinguished for their fine condition, selections from those of Lord Northwick and Burgon, recently from that of Wigan, and the slow, but continuous, purchases at public sales, to which all the older collections have succumbed. If the taste for coins has not declined, the fashion of collecting them has, and the last of important private collections is that of the late General Fox. Cabinets may be as numerous, but their contents are less complete. Public museums ultimately attract all the unique and finer specimens. The private collector feels he cannot contend against national exchequers, and the pride of accumulating is thus extinguished. The coin once pigeon-holed never reappears in the market, and the collector might as well hope to obtain a lost Pleiad.

The study of Greek numismatics began with the publication of Goltzius in the sixteenth century, but it was not till 1762 that Pellerin engraved the first plate, in which the size, flaws, and condition of the coin were indicated. Subsequent writers followed the example of this numismatist. Catalogues of the principal cabinets were also published—that of Dr. William Hunter, in 1782, with excellent engravings and descriptions by C. Combe; that of the national collections, in 1814, by Taylor Combe, his son, the plates drawn by Corbould and engraved by Moses. The collection bequeathed by Payne Knight was published from his own descriptions in Latin in 1830, since which time no catalogue has appeared from the Museum till the present year. Similar in plan, but with more critical remarks interspersed, Leake gave in 1854 his "Numismata Hellenica," an account of his coin and electrotypes unaccompanied by engravings.

The catalogue of his coins of Italy of the Greek series of the Museum, published by Mr. Poole, follows the same general method of arrangement as the older catalogues, with the exception of outline wood-cuts of the coins, introduced into the text. These are fairly executed, but are certainly not finer as works of art than the figures of the coins of the Syrian kings, by Bartolozzi, or the engravings of the older catalogue by Moses. It seems to have been agreed among numismatists that the literature of the subject should be neglected, the compiler being content with describing each coin without tracing the history of the assignment, or the works in which each specimen has been successively published or engraved. It is to be regretted that numismatists have not followed the example of naturalists in this respect, as mere skeleton descriptions afford no clue to the learned labyrinth of the study. Another important point is the condition of a coin indicated in some catalogues by letters imperfectly seen, being marked by fainter lines.

In this country the refinement of collectors has attached great value to condition, and increases the price of those in a beautiful state of preservation from pence to pounds. The sixteen volumes of Mionnet, published from 1806–1837, are, notwithstanding the disparaging observations passed on them, the best guide to the collector. This work, originally compiled to aid the sale of sulphur impressions, although not so highly scientific, contained all that was required—the style, the size, the rarity, and the market value. In this the author was assisted by Rollin, the celebrated French coin dealer of the Rue Vivienne, at Paris.

Undoubtedly the most beautiful of the Greek series are the coins of Italy, especially those of Southern Italy, where the Greek colonist founded a new Hellas in the seventh century B. C. There are noble specimens of art in the Peloponnesian coinage, and exquisite gems in those of Asia Minor, but the series of Italy and Sicily excel both. The standard of the currency was Attic, the art of the finest Greek, the tone the softest Italian. The earlier coins are remarkable. A thick bracteate kind of didrachm prevailed at the earliest period at Crotona, Metapontum, Sybaris, Posidonia or Pæstum, and Tarentum. The type on one side was in relief, and the same in cuse or in intaglio on the other. The latter coins rapidly improved, and their art was only rivalled, if excelled, by that of Sicily. A series of numerous didrachms, no two alike, was issued in the third and fourth centuries B. C., from the mint of Tarentum. Taras, son of Neptune, and founder of the state, is represented by sea and land, riding on a dolphin or mounted on a horse in several attitudes. The gold staters are also remarkably fine, and that on which the young Taras runs out of the sea to his father Neptune is as beautiful as it is rare. The didrachms of Heraclea, with the head of Pallas and Hercules strangling the Nemean lion, are fine in style and wonderful in execution. Thurium, which succeeded Sybaris, and was founded by Athens, B. C. 444, struck didrachms of exquisite beauty, with Scylla on the helm of Minerva's head, and a bull rushing to butt.

Charming examples of the engraver's art are also found on the didrachms of Terrina, where Iris or Nike appears in many devices. The copper coins of Neapolis or Naples are remarkable for the beauty of their blue patina, produced by a volcanic soil. The coins of Northern Italy, Etruria, Latium, Umbria, are unwieldy masses of brass or copper, cast, not struck. The historical As of Servius Tullius is not found; it is a myth of the Lays of Rome. The heavy and inconvenient copper of Etruria and the surrounding territory is, after all, not much older than the third century B. C. Silver is limited to the town of Populonia; the rest is doubtful; Greek language disappears from the coins; the Etruscan appears. The coins of Samnium, issued during the Social or Marsic war, are silver, with Oscan legends, and belong to another system. There was no unity. The coins of Italy have been well engraved and amply illustrated. The Italians Borghesi, Carelli, Cavedoni, and Tessieri, were excellent numismatists, while the English Millingen has illustrated the history and types, and the German Mommsen the Etruscan, Oscan, and Roman monetary systems.

The science of numismatics has been so far explored that great discoveries are exhausted, but the labor of cataloguing coins has not diminished. Catalogues are chiefly useful as subsidiary to the labors of the master minds, like Eckhel or Mommsen, who generalize such subjects and group together the meaning of the devices and other minor points of these microscopic objects of antiquity. Surrounded by an apparently eternal civilization, it is too often forgotten that so much of it is perishable. A coin may represent a reign, a space in time, or a people; it is buried, forgotten, and reappears. Not explaining itself, history, science, and literature are required for its illustration. It may add the name of an obscure town or an unknown prince to our knowledge, but no more. It satisfies curiosity with a portrait. In art, however, it is a little jewel. Its value has attracted the attention of forgers, and the discrimination of the difference between the true old specimen and its fictitious substitute demands a special gift of mind or a long experience. — *London Times*.

THE TREASURE TROVE

DISCOVERED at the Bay of Fundy is briefly mentioned by telegraph, but the finders refuse to reveal the spot where the buried treasure was discovered. The *St. John Daily Telegraph* gives a long account of the affair, although omitting names and localities.

The finder and his associates tell of marks found on large rocks now on the shore, which were deciphered, and pointed to the fact that treasure was buried in the vicinity. Old excavations in a bank which had been partially washed away by the waters were quite numerous. Further from the shore and near the edge of a fir and spruce thicket, on the side of a rock which is some ten feet high, is the following, cut with a chisel, but nearly obliterated :

L ORE I INE, VE AND WA HA SEC AND
VE DE.

The above was interpreted as follows :

LABORE IS VAIN, YE GRAVE AND WATERS HAVE TAKEN YE SECRETE
AND YE GOLDE.

Not long ago the son of the man and woman who offered the coins for sale was out gunning, and as he passed along the shore he observed that the high clay bank, in which the excavations had been made, had caved away considerably.

His joy may, perhaps, be imagined when he discovered a piece of broken pottery, and scattered near it a quantity of coin. The vessel, which had evi-

dently contained the gold, had lain mouth downward. A piece of copper had been fitted to the bottom, inside, and on a piece of vellum, inclosed in a wrapper of the same material, and placed between the copper and the bottom, was the following, written quite evenly :

Ye men of ye goode shippe Royal Harrie took ye Spaniard Ferdinande in ye maine sea near to Hispaniola with much treasure. She hadde an anker of silver, which we buried in ye banke twelve pikes' lengthes due northe, and a goldene heade like to a manne's buried fortie pikes' lengthes to the northe. Thys treasure is putte here bye Johnne Morgane, ye captaine of syd Harrie, ye Spanyard's beinge in ye Baie.

The writing and vellum were in a remarkable state of preservation, presenting the appearance of being not more than twenty years old.

The coins are of two kinds, both of which are quite ancient, and of a pattern not in use at the present day. Several of them are evidently Hindoostanee. The majority of the pieces are Spanish pistoles and half pistoles; the date of their issue being thought to be about 1556. The tradition has been handed down from father to son, that in olden times an English pirate, having plundered and burned a Spanish galleon, was chased up the Bay of Fundy, and buried money on the spot where the coins in question were found.

[We should be glad to hear something more of this remarkable discovery. The story reads as if from the *Daily Telegraph* of April 1. — Eds.]

TRANSACTIONS OF SOCIETIES.

BOSTON NUMISMATIC SOCIETY.

January 1. The annual meeting was held this day. The Secretary read the report of the last meeting, which was accepted, and two letters from Mr. Isaac F. Wood of New York, accompanying donations of medals from Mr. Wood himself, and of the rare and beautiful French bronze medal of President Lincoln from M. E. Caylus; for both of these gifts thanks were voted. The Secretary also read a short notice of Mr. John Y. Akerman of England, an Honorary Member, whose death had come to our knowledge since the last meeting. Mr. Henry W. Holland of Cambridge was elected a Resident Member. Mr. Pratt from the committee appointed to nominate officers for the present year, reported as follows: For President, Jeremiah Colburn; Vice-President and Curator, Henry Davenport; Treasurer, John Robinson; Secretary, William S. Appleton. The report was accepted, and the persons named were voted to be officers of the Society for 1874. Mr. Crosby exhibited the copy belonging to Mr. Jules Marcou of the French-American coin with inscription "DOUBLE DE L'AMERIQUE FRANÇOISE." The Secretary exhibited a plated medal of Washington, struck in anticipation of the Centennial Celebration, and dated 1876; he spoke in terms of strong condemnation of the practice of placing a false date on coins or medals, as overthrowing one of the most faithful evidences of history. The Society adjourned at 4 3-4 P. M.

WM. S. APPLETON, *Secretary*.

February 5. A monthly meeting was held this day. The Secretary read the report of the last meeting, which was accepted, and a letter from Mr. Henry W. Holland, accepting membership. Mr. William F. Johnson of Newton was elected a Resident Member. Dr. Green read a memoir of Mr. James Parker of Springfield, a Resident Member, who had died since the last meeting. Mr. Crosby exhibited an engraved copper piece of 1776, belonging to Mr. C. M. Hodge of Newburyport, and supposed to be a pattern for a coin of New Hampshire. Mr. Parmelee exhibited several choice pieces, including the token of Richard Dawson of Gloucester Co., Virginia, the "CONTINENTAL CURRENCY" in silver, rare Washingtons, etc. The President exhibited some pieces belonging to Mr. C. P. Nichols of Springfield, among which were the two French-American medalets, described in report of meeting of November, 1869, and some curious tickets or checks for theatres. Mr. Pratt communicated the set of six patterns for the trade dollar, bought for the Society at their standard value instead of the market price of fifteen dollars. The Secretary read an extract from a *Massachusetts Spy* of 1784, containing suggestions for making the coins of the United States serve also as memorial medals. Mr. Slafter read a paper on the connection of Sir William Alexander, Lord Stirling, with the coinage of Scotland, and exhibited specimens of two of the coins belonging to the Secretary. It was voted by the Society that Mr. Slafter be requested to prepare the paper for publication in the *Journal of Numismatics*. The Society adjourned at 5 1-4 P. M.

WM. S. APPLETON, *Secretary*.

March 5. A monthly meeting was held this day. The Secretary read the report of the last meeting, which was accepted. Mr. George C. Creamer of Salem was nominated for membership, and under a suspension of the sixth by-law was immediately elected a Resident Member. Mr. Crosby exhibited one of the Washington Season Medals in silver, and the "IMMUNE COLUMBIA" with head of George III. Mr. Parmelee showed several rare pieces, the curious little "NEW YORKE IN AMERICA" in brass in beautiful preservation, two specimens of the token of Richard Dawson of Gloucester Co., Virginia, one of which was just bought, a very fine "IMMUNIS COLUMBIA" with New Jersey shield, two Washingtons, etc. Mr. Holland exhibited a specimen in bronze of the medal presented to G. W. Robinson, for saving the life of Secretary Seward, and a curious copper medal of 1589, with Dutch inscription and some men shooting arrows at a woman who is bound to a tree; the men are by Mr. Holland thought to be Indians, showing that the medal has some connection either with the East or West Indies. The Secretary showed a curious silver medal, concerning which information is much desired. It has on one side an Indian standing near a wigwam, over which flies a dove with olive-branch toward the Indian; inscription, "TYRANIS IN PERPETUUM ABET TERRA"; rev. "JUVENUS CONFEDERATIO AMERICANA"; in the centre a G in a circle of fifteen stars, around which are fifteen rays, pointing inwards. It is not certainly known to be more than a few years old, and the number of stars and rays have suggested a possible connection with the Southern Confederacy. The Society adjourned at about 5 P. M.

WM. S. APPLETON, *Secretary*.

LOST POSSIBILITIES OF AMERICAN COINAGE.

To the PRINTER.

THE custom of the Greeks and Romans, in perpetuating the great achievements of their patriots and heroes, by significant inscriptions on their current coin, was a policy very worthy of imitation. Perhaps the hints here suggested, may not be altogether useless, when Congress think proper to establish an American coinage.

The piece of greatest value, might have on one side, General Washington, in armour, with a wreath around his head: His right hand pointing to a globe, supported by liberty with her spear and cap; and on the globe, the continent of North-America. Circular inscription; WASHINGTON, THE FATHER OF HIS COUNTRY. — On the reverse a shepherd reclined under a pine, playing on a reed, with oxen before a plough, and sheep near him. Circular inscription — PEACE, THE FRUIT OF GLORIOUS WAR. — 1783.

On another coin, may be depicted an escalade of a city. — A hero in the principal light, advancing to the walls. Inscription. — MONTGOMERY SOUGHT and FOUND THE GOAL of HONOUR. On the reverse; a cottage, &c. a hero in armour, between Liberty and Justice, looking back as he is leaving it. Inscription — GLORY AND MY COUNTRY CALLS. — 1775.

It is said that General Warren was sensible of the perilous situation of the party on Bunker's Hill, when contending with a superiour British army; yet thought there was a propriety at the commencement of hostilities, that the foes to his country, should feel and dread the American resistance; and he fell a sacrifice to that sentiment.

A warrior with his sword drawn, standing near a slight fortification, from which might rise clouds of smoke; just before it, the enemy flying, and some lying dead. Inscription. WARREN, AMERICA'S FIRST MARTYR. — On the reverse; the hero's bust, and over it FAME, with her trumpet in one hand, and a wreath in the other. Inscription, HE LIVES IN COLUMBIA'S WARM REMEMBRANCE. — 1775.

The important event at Saratoga, may be delineated by a General surrendering his sword into his conqueror's hands. Inscription, GATES VICTORIOUS. — On the reverse; Columbia encircling the brows of her soldier with laurel. Inscription — AMERICA IS GRATEFUL. — 1777.

General Greene's very important services to the southward, might be represented by a leader pointing with his sword to a flying enemy, their standard under his feet. Inscription — GREENE, THE TERROUR OF HIS COUNTRY'S FOES. — On the reverse; a warrior entering the temple of fame. Inscription — COLUMBIA EXULTS IN SUCH SONS. — 1782.

Thus the noble fall of Mercer, the gallantry of Wayne, and the intrepidity of Jones, might be handed down to posterity, in the most diffusive and permanent manner. Current coin is more or less in the hands of all; and endures when statues of marble lie prostrate in the dust.

The foregoing paragraphs were printed in the *Massachusetts Spy* for 5 February, 1784, being copied from *The New York Journal*. The "hints

here suggested" were of course derived from the Romans, with whom every coin was a medal. The coins of many emperors therefore celebrate the events of his reign, the members of his family, and the whole array of Gods and Goddesses. The same plan has been somewhat followed in modern times, notably by the Popes, successors to the home of the Emperors. After them, a long series of medal-coins was issued by Louis I., the art and antiquity loving king of Bavaria; other countries have also struck occasional exceptional pieces answering the double purpose, and many of the German states have commemorated the last war by a victory-thaler.

But this article from the *Spy* particularly suggests to us the loss of the opportunity of a coinage, which might have rivalled in interest that of Rome, though it is perhaps hardly safe to say that it would have equalled hers in beauty. Even this, however, might have been, and the neglected geniuses, who are only known by a few medals, especially Furst and Gobrecht, might have found a wider field in life, and left greater names in death. Poor and inartistic as our coinage has been, our series of medals contains some exquisite ones, mostly the work of the two men just named. But had this medallic plan been adopted, what a historic succession of coins we should certainly have. The heroes and statesmen of the Revolution would have been followed by the adoption of the Constitution, bringing with it the succession of Presidents inaugurated and States admitted. The victories of the War of 1812-15 would be celebrated in a shape familiar to all, instead of only by the medals now known to a few. The visit of Lafayette, the introduction of the telegraph, and the Mexican War, would have brought the series nearly to the date when the necessary issue of national paper would have caused a suspension in another sense than that of most importance. The commemoration in this method of the deaths of men thought worthy of it, would have given us a familiar memorial of all the great, such as we may well regret, even with the risk of finding among them some whom History would have declared unworthy of such prominence. As it is, we can only weep over our lost possibilities, for no true American and numismatist would wish to see the work begun under such men as now rule, and among such events as now distinguish the course of affairs of the United States of America.

ABORIGINES OF CALIFORNIA.

In the southern provinces of China, the grave is generally made in the shape of the Greek letter Ω ; the Indians usually dig it round. In the Province of Fuhkien in South China (from which part the ancestors of the Indians appear to have come), a piece of silver is placed in the mouth of the corpse. Not long ago, on the occasion of the death of a rich Sanèl chief, two gold coins were put in his mouth as he lay on the funeral pyre (this is given on the testimony of a worthy farmer, Mr. Willard, who witnessed it), and other smaller coins were placed in his ears, in his hands, on his breast, etc., which, together with the other property burned, were estimated at \$500 value. The California Indians are worthy of their State in one regard at least; they are no niggards. And it is this extraordinary regard for the dead, coupled

with their indifference and even cruelty to the living, which stamps them so strongly as of Chinese origin.

From the March number of the Atlantic Monthly, p. 320.

LARGE BOOTY.

THE business of melting down the plate was intrusted to the Indian goldsmiths, who were thus required to undo the work of their own hands. They toiled day and night, but such was the quantity to be recast, that it consumed a full month. When the whole was reduced to bars of a uniform standard, they were nicely weighed, under the superintendence of the royal inspectors. The total amount of the gold was found to be one million three hundred and twenty-six thousand five hundred and thirty-nine *pesos de oro*, which, allowing for the greater value of money in the sixteenth century, would be equivalent, probably, at the present time, to near *three million and a half of pounds sterling*, or somewhat less than *fifteen millions and a half of dollars*. The quantity of silver was estimated at fifty-one thousand six hundred and ten marks.

History affords no parallel of such a booty, and that, too, in the most convertible form, in ready money, as it were — having fallen to the lot of a little band of military adventurers, like the Conquerors of Peru. — Prescott's *Conquest of Peru*, vol. I. pp. 466-468.

NEWSPAPER CUTTINGS.

THE following was cut out just too late to be printed on page 59 of this volume. It is almost needless to say that there are no coins of a date 1000 B. C., except perhaps Chinese.

Under circumstances not related there has been discovered in Columbus, Ga., a shekel coined in King Solomon's time, one thousand years before the Christian era. On one side is a representation of a vase, or probably a sacrificial altar, and the inscription in Hebrew, "Shekel of Israel." On the reverse side is a representation of a tree, and the inscription, "Holiness of Jerusalem." It is about the size and weight of what we have known as the "Spanish" or "Mexican quarter."

TIME.

BY TEMPUS.

"Time is money," the economist cries,
Take care of the precious minutes,
Lose not a golden second as it flies,
For an age is made of minutes.

"Time is money," the prodigal replies,
And then he scatters what he gets.
To care for expense is unwise,
We will take *time* to pay our debts.

A WORD ON NUMISMATICS.

HITHERTO, our American collectors, especially young men, have devoted themselves almost exclusively to the coins and medals which relate to American history. The natural consequence of such special attention to a very narrow field of study and investigation, has been the enormous advance of prices for rare specimens, possessing little or no historical interest, and only sought because of their rarity, or to fill vacancies in long series. The sale of a dollar of 1794 a few weeks ago, at a price twenty times its value for any collection, was but the natural effect of the operating cause. The list of American coins may well be a subject of moderate interest to the young collector, and some specimens are worth large prices. But the genuine lover of the science of numismatics understands that it is a world-wide subject, and its greatest points of interest are in connection with the grand historic events which are recorded only in bronze or in marble, as well as with those of which men have written in the few books that survive to us from ancient times. It certainly seems ridiculous that at a sale in New York two pieces of silver should be offered, one a shekel of Jerusalem, of the time of the Maccabees, and the other a dollar of the United States of America, and the dollar bring more than ten times as much as the shekel. Yet, just this occurred at the last great sale held by Bangs, Merwin, & Co.

There is a common apprehension in relation to ancient coins that they may be counterfeits. This fear need not deter any collector from entering on the field. There are not as many counterfeits of ancient coins as of modern. The fact that such enormous prices are paid for modern coins has led to the manufacture of many. But such prices are not paid for ancient coins, except of the extremest rarity, and on these the judgment of the best numismatist can always be obtained before purchasing. The young person who desires to make a collection of ancient coins should limit his field to one series at a time, and perfect that as well as he can. The silver *denarii* of Rome would alone be sufficient to engross his spare time for years. The ordinary specimens can be purchased at prices varying from fifty cents to a dollar each, in fine condition and of undoubted genuineness. The English dealers supply them in quantities, and they are there so regular a matter of trade that prices are fixed and do not vary for years. A series of silver coins of the Emperors is one of the most interesting that can be made, and without going into sub-varieties, can be made up with ease and without too great expenditure. There is of course a very large variety of the coins of each Emperor, and it is frequently necessary to pay a very high price to secure a particular variety. — *New York Journal of Commerce*, December 14, 1863.

WORK AT THE MINT.

THE officers of the Philadelphia Mint have been instructed to use two thirds of its entire capacity in the coinage of silver, until otherwise ordered. Under this arrangement the Mint can turn out from \$1,000,000 to \$1,500,000 per month.

NEW NICKEL COINAGE.

THE German Mint, as we learn from a recent English paper, has issued five and ten penny pieces composed of nickel, some of which are already circulating in Mecklenburg. Much interest has been excited by an account given by Dr. Flight of the British Museum, of some experiments made by him on coins of the Indo-Greek Kings, Enthydamus (200 B. C.), Pantaleon (135 B. C.), and Agathokles (120 B. C.). The analysis of the coins of these three reigns gave the same result. They contained 20 per cent. of nickel, 77 per cent. of copper, and 3 per cent. of iron, tin, cobalt, and sulphur. Dr. Flight then analyzed the new Belgian nickel coins. These contained 70.4 copper, 25.55 nickel, and 4.41 iron, etc., the difference in the mixture being, therefore, but slight. The Chinese have, according to the same authority, long used a metal which they call white copper. It is composed of 79.4 copper, 16.02 nickel, and 4.58 tin. Nickel was not, however, known in Europe till 1751, when it was discovered by Cronstedt. This metal has for some time past been coined in North America, Peru, Belgium, and Switzerland, and the introduction of nickel coinage into Brazil and Honduras is now contemplated.

This appears to show a far more extensive use of this metal in ancient coinage than has heretofore been suspected.

THE TRADE DOLLAR THE STANDARD IN CHINA.

THE Treasury Department have received advices from Peking, China, that the new trade dollar of the United States has been assayed by the commissioner of the Chinese empire, and reported to be of more intrinsic value than the Mexican or Dutch dollars, which have been the standard coin among the Chinese for more than a century, and an imperial edict has consequently been issued making the United States silver dollar a dollar for all the Chinese. The demand in this country for Mexican silver dollars to use in the China trade has sometimes been so great that they have sold higher than gold, and are now at par and a little better in San Francisco, being exported to China and Japan by every steamer. — *Boston Daily Advertiser*.

SACRAMENTAL TOKENS.

I TAKE the following note in reference to these tokens mentioned on page 44 of this volume, from a pamphlet, "Communication of Samuel Hazard, Esq., to the Board of Trustees of the Second Presbyterian Church, Phila. John G. Clarke & Son, Printers, &c., 1864. Pp. 16." On page 7, Mr. Hazard says, giving an account of his recollections of the Church, "On the Saturday evening preceding the Sacramental occasions, the minister and elders distributed from the circle around the pulpit to communicants small pieces of metal called 'tokens,' the object of which was to prevent persons from improperly

communing; on one side of these tokens was impressed a heart; the reverse side was plain or impressed with the name of the congregation; the use of these tokens was, however, in a few years dispensed with." W. J. P.

Camden, New Jersey, March 24, 1874.

NUMISMATIC ITEMS.

THE following interesting items have been kindly furnished us by Mr. William John Potts, of Camden, N. J., an enthusiastic student in numismatics. — EDS.

Mass. Mag. for May, 1789. — "His Excellency the Governour and His Honour the Lieutenant Governour, when they appeared to take the oaths of office, were in complete suits of American manufactured Broadcloth. The buttons on the coat of his Excellency were of silver, and of American manufacture. Device a shepherd shearing his sheep — Motto, 'You gain more by our lives than by our deaths.'

"The Secretary and Treasurer of the Commonwealth, and a number of the members of the Legislature, have also evinced their patriotism by encouraging the manufactures of their country."

Mass. Mag. for March, 1790. — *The Boston News* has the following under the title of "The Arts": "Nothing gives us more satisfaction than to note the happy advancement of the Arts and Sciences in our Country. At present we have the peculiar pleasure of announcing to the citizens of America, the completion, by Mr. Gullager, of an elegant bust of the President of the United States in Plaster of Paris, as large as life — in which the beholder, at first view, recognizes the Great Deliverer of our Country. The Connoisseurs who have visited Mr. Gullager's room to examine this beautiful piece of Statuary, are unanimous in pronouncing its merits, and the merits of the ingenious artist who has produced it.

"Medals of the President of the United States are now a striking at Philadelphia which are said to convey great likenesses of our illustrious chief."

Mass. Mag. for May, 1791. "France. The national assembly have decreed, that the judges of the tribunal of appeal, shall enjoy salaries of 8,000 livres per annum. They are to be dressed in black, to wear a black coat faced with the same, and a ribbon at the button hole, formed of the three national colours, to which shall be pendant a medal, with this inscription 'La Loi.'"

Mass. Mag. for June, 1791. "His Majesty's effigies is to appear on all the gold coin of the kingdom, surrounded by the motto *Louis 16th, King of Frenchmen*. The reverse is to be adorned with a figure representing the Genius of France, standing before an Altar, and engraving the new Constitution on it by means of the Sceptre of Reason, which is particularized by an eye at its extremity. At one side of the altar a cock is to appear as the symbol of vigilance and on the other a bundle of Rods, in the manner of the Roman Fasces, as an emblem of the union of an armed republic. The legend surrounding this is *the reign of the Law*, and on the edge '*the Nation, the Law, and the King*.'"

Mass. Mag. for Feb., 1793. "Medals. We have authority to inform the publick, that in the month of January, the school committee distributed 21 silver medals, with suitable inscriptions and devices, to the most deserving boys in the upper classes of the Free Schools in Boston. These medals are the amount of the annual income of the donation made by the late Dr. Franklin; and were bestowed agreeably to his direction, as honorary rewards for the encouragement of scholarship in free schools."

THE dollars issued by General Morelos, of the Mexican revolution, 1812 and 1813, on one side of which is a bow and the word *Sud*, and on the other "M^o, 8 R.," are seldom found.

EARLY French crowns, in fine condition, are quite scarce; they contain a small amount of gold which has been parted profitably in years past.

PLATINUM was discovered by Wood, an assayer in Jamaica, in the year 1741.

PALLADIUM was discovered by Wollaston, in 1803; it is found with platinum and in combination with gold.

NOTES AND QUERIES.

Editors American Journal Numismatics:

If any reader of the *Journal* is cognizant of any medal or token relating to the "Martyr-Spy" of the Revolution, as he is often called, Captain Nathan Hale, I should be greatly obliged for a full and accurate description through your columns, or reference to any such description if already published.

Yours,

ISAAC F. WOOD.

New York, March 18, 1874.

"Am I not a man and a brother?" From a medallion, by Wedgwood (1768), representing a negro in chains, with one knee on the ground, and both hands lifted up to heaven. This was adopted as a characteristic seal by the Anti-slavery Society of London. — Bartlett's *Familiar Quotations*.

While partially removing the old building at the corner of Washington and Warren streets, Boston Highlands (once the residence of Governor Sumner), a coin was found between the floors of a rare and curious workmanship. It was of copper, and bore on one side the inscription, "A Norwich farthing, 1668." On the reverse, a crown, underneath which was a fox.

The total coinage of the United States mints for the last fiscal year amounted to 32,523,670 coins, and to \$38,689,183 in value.

American educational authorship has been honored at the Vienna Exposition by the award of a Medal of Progress to Professor Arnold Guyot, of the College of New Jersey, at Princeton, for his geographical works. This medal is the highest medal awarded. It ranks next to the "Grand Diploma of Honor," and above the "Medal of Merit."

WOOD'S MEMORIAL MEDAL.

Of the Memorial Medal, issued by Mr. I. F. Wood, of New York City, which was noticed in the January number of the *Journal*, twenty-five only were struck in silver, price \$2.00 each. For sale by Edward Cogan, 408 State St., Brooklyn, N. Y.

The dies of the above medal are to be cancelled:—the obverse to be deposited with the Boston Numismatic Society, and the reverse with the New England Historic, Genealogical Society.

COMING COIN SALES.

THE sale of the "Groux Collection," containing many interesting ancient medals and coins, announced some time since, will take place in New York, April 7th, 8th, and 9th, at the rooms of Messrs. Leavitt, auctioneers, in Clinton Hall.

Mr. Edward Cogan, of Brooklyn, will sell the Collection of the late James Parker, of Springfield, Mass., about the first of May.

SHREVEPORT MEDALS.

A VERY interesting ceremony took place at the Board of Trade Rooms in Shreveport, on the occasion of the presentation of medals by the Howard Association to the ladies who distinguished themselves during the late epidemic by their noble and self-sacrificing conduct. On one side of the medals was engraved the name of the lady, and "From the Howards of Shreveport, La." On the reverse, "For Christian Kindness and Heroic Conduct. Epidemic, 1873."

OBITUARY.

MR. JAMES PARKER of Springfield, a member of the Boston Numismatic Society, died at his residence on the second day of last January, at the age of 58 years. Few men in Western Massachusetts were known more widely, or had a larger circle of friends. He was born in Hollis, New Hampshire, and was descended from one of the earliest settlers of Groton, Massachusetts. In early life he was a stage-driver for a short time, after which he became connected, as a conductor, with the new railroad then building between Worcester and Albany. In this capacity he accompanied the first passenger train that ever entered Springfield. This proved the beginning of a long and honorable service, lasting continuously through a period of thirty years. He resigned this position in 1869 to take the superintendency of the sleeping cars between Boston and New York, and in 1872 he became the superintendent of the express line on the same road with the entire charge of all the cars. He was a member of the House of Representatives in 1872, and at the election in November last was again chosen to the Legislature now in session.

The simple statement of these facts gives, however, no full idea of Mr. Parker's character as he was known to his friends. A man of genial disposition, he possessed the happy faculty of attracting others around him, and winning in no common degree their confidence and friendship. He had refined tastes, and was always an earnest student in American history. During many years, and from many sources, he had been collecting a remarkable library illustrating the subjects in which he was most interested. He was never so happy as when under his own roof he was showing his friends the rare editions, the fine engravings, or the autographs, in which his library abounded. While yet a young man he took a decided interest in Numismatics, and began to make a collection of coins and medals. His zeal in the subject never tired, and he was adding to the collection during his whole life. Mr. Parker was chosen a member of this Society, February 2, 1865. On account of his business engagements his attendance at the meetings has not been frequent. He often expressed his regret that this was the case. In his death many friends mourn the loss of one who was always true to the better and finer feelings of his nature. James Parker will not soon be forgotten.

JOHN YONGE AKERMAN, F. S. A., died at Abingdon, Berkshire, 18th November, 1873. He was born in 1806, and from his early youth began to pay attention to Numismatics, for the knowledge of the Anglo-Saxon and English branch of which he acquired a just reputation. In 1836 he started mainly at his own cost the first Numismatic Journal, and on the institution of the Numismatic Society in the following year became its Secretary, and till 1860 Editor of the Journal of the Society. 1848-60 he was Secretary of the Society of Antiquaries. He was the author of many valuable works, and papers relating to numismatics and archæology, among which may be noticed *Descriptive Catalogue of Rare and Unedited Roman Coins*, 2 vols. 1834, *Observations on the Coinage of the Ancient Britons*, 1837, *A Numismatic Manual*, 1840, *Tradesmen's Tokens struck in London and Vicinity 1648-1671*, 1843, *Coins of the Romans relating to Britain*, 1844, *Ancient Coins of Cities and Princes, comprising those of Spain, France, and Britain*, 1846, *Numismatic Illustrations of the New Testament*, 1846, *Examples of Coffee-House, Tavern, and Tradesmen's Tokens*, 1847, *Introduction to the Study of Ancient and Modern Coins*, 1848, *List of Tokens issued by Wiltshire Tradesmen in the Seventeenth Century*. For his *Coins of the Romans relating to Britain*, Mr. Akerman received the medal of the French Institute, and his services generally to different branches of Archæology were acknowledged by his election as an honorary member into many foreign societies. He was chosen an honorary member of the Boston Numismatic Society, 4th April, 1862.

EDITORIAL.

A CORRESPONDENT of the *New York Times*, suggests that the government strike a commemorative dollar, with a suitable inscription, to mark the first step taken toward a resumption of specie payment by the exchange of silver for greenbacks.

THE well-known collector, Mr. M. Moore, of Trenton Falls, N. Y., writes us that he has one of the George III. medals described on page 59 of our January number, in superb condition.

WE should have mentioned in our last number that the article by the late Mr. Champion and the illustrations, were kindly furnished by Dr. Jona. Edwards, Jr., of New Haven, Conn.

Coffee: Its History, Cultivation, and Uses. By Robert Hewitt, Jr. Illustrated with original designs, etc., etc. New York: D. Appleton & Co. 1872. Sm. 8vo. pp. 102.

The author of the above work was at one time an enthusiastic collector of Medals and Coins, and although at present engaged in business pursuits he has not lost his interest in Numismatics, believing with a celebrated writer, that "relaxation from worldly occupation, both bodily and intellectual, so that it be rational in its object and reasonable in its duration, is essential to man's existence." He has given an interesting account of the Coffee-plant, its cultivation in Arabia, East Indies, and South America, and the various methods of its preparation as a beverage, from its introduction in 1554 to the latest Parisian mode. The binding is emblematical of the plant, and the illustrations and map of the coffee growing countries add much to the value of the book.

WHILE making some repairs in the Broadway House, Cambridgeport, Mass., a short time since, on taking down an old chimney, there were found in it, in good condition, a Spanish dollar of 1811, an American cent of 1798, and bills of various denominations to the nominal value of five hundred dollars.

WE are informed that from 1822 up to 1827 the following gentlemen were the prominent collectors in the city of New York: Mr. Philip Hone, Mr. John Allan, Mr. Pierre Flandin, Mr. James Thornton, and Messrs. A. D. and M. Moore; the last named gentleman still continues the pursuit. American coins were but little sought for at that time.

CURRENCY.

FINANCIAL writers say there is no currency so elastic as gold, for it passes as money in all countries.

MANY young Americans will not believe that silver coin is money, so accustomed are they to scrip and nickels.

THE Potosi silver mine, in the Andes of Peru, is eleven thousand three hundred and seventy-five feet above the level of the sea.

I THINK there is a great affinity between coins and poetry, and that your medallist and critic are much nearer related than the world generally imagines. — Addison.

ONE of our exchanges speaks of "a gentleman who was arrested on the charge of counterfeiting nickels." It is impossible to believe that any "gentleman," in possession of his five centses, would engage in so base a business.

A GENERATION of school-children are on the stage, to whom an American silver coin is about as great a curiosity as an English sovereign.

THE early dollars of Peru coined at the mint at *Cusco*, which name they bear, are scarce.

CAST coins or medals have a blurred and coarse appearance; they are deficient in the smoothness and sharpness of the stamped coin.

HALF dollars of Mexican coinage are scarce. In 1824 dollars and parts were struck, on which the head of the eagle was turned downward.

